



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact for Working Press Only:
Office of Public Affairs: 202/401-1576

Contact for Schools and Families Only:
Presidential Scholars Office: 319/341-2PSP (341-2777)
PSP@act.org

LOCAL STUDENT _____
NAMED CANDIDATE IN PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

_____, a graduating senior at _____, has been named one of more than 3,000 candidates in the 2009 Presidential Scholars Program. The candidates were selected from nearly 2.8 million students expected to graduate from U.S. high schools in the year 2009.

Inclusion in the Presidential Scholars Program, now in its 45th year, is one of the highest honors bestowed upon graduating high school seniors. Scholars are selected on the basis of superior academic and artistic achievements, leadership qualities, strong character and involvement in community and school activities.

The 3,000 candidates were selected for their exceptional performance on either the College Board SAT or the ACT Assessment. Further consideration is based on students' essays, self-assessments, descriptions of activities, school recommendations, and school transcripts. A distinguished panel of educators will review these submissions and select 500 semifinalists in early April.

The Commission on Presidential Scholars, a group of some 32 eminent citizens appointed by the President, will make final selection of the Scholars. They will select one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. students living abroad; 15 students at-large; and up to 20 students from the creative and performing arts. The U.S. Department of Education will announce the Scholars in May.

Scholars will be invited to Washington, DC, for several days in June to receive the Presidential Scholars medallion at a recognition ceremony and to participate in events and activities with their elected representatives, educators, and other leading individuals in public life.

_____ is the son/daughter of _____, and can be reached at _____.

For more information about the Presidential Scholars program, parents and students can call the Presidential Scholars Office at 319/341-2PSP (341-2777), or send an e-mail to PSP@act.org.

###

NOTE TO NEWS EDITORS: A complete list of candidates will be available on the program's web page <http://www.ed.gov/programs/psp/awards.html> (case sensitive). Semifinalists will be announced early April and Scholars in May. News media without Internet access may call 202/401-1576 for a list of candidates by state. For more information about the student(s), contact the student(s) directly.

About the news release...

Your selection as a candidate in the Presidential Scholars Program is an honor for you and your community and deserves attention from the local media. It is essential that the media receive this information promptly, while it is newsworthy. Thus, we request that you complete and send the enclosed materials to your local media immediately.

This packet contains press releases and fact sheets that you can use to make the public aware of your achievements as well as bring wider recognition and understanding of the Presidential Scholars Program to a greater number of the nation's educators, students, parents, and guardians.

Please note the six blank lines in the body of the press release.

- In the first and second blanks, insert your full name;
- In the third blank, insert your school's name;
- In the fourth blank, insert your first name;
- In the fifth blank, insert your parents'/guardians' full name(s); and
- In the sixth blank, insert your phone number.

You may send a copy of the completed press release and fact sheet to any news source you choose. Some suggestions are: the Mayor of your community, local newspapers, radio and television stations, and school publications. For newspapers, send releases to either the Education Editor at a major metropolitan newspaper, or to the City Desk. For radio and television stations, releases should be sent to the News Director.

If you or your parents have any questions about these instructions, please contact the Presidential Scholars office at 319/341-2PSP (341-2777) or PSP@act.org.

THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

FACT SHEET

The United States Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by Executive Order of the President, to recognize and honor some of our Nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the Program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. Each year, up to 141 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the Nation's highest honors for high school students. The Scholars represent excellence in education and the promise of greatness in young people. In honoring the Presidential Scholars, the President of the United States symbolically honors all graduating high school seniors of high potential.

Students have the opportunity to become Presidential Scholars based on two paths of accomplishment. The majority of the Scholars are selected on the basis of broad academic achievement. Approximately twenty additional students are selected on the basis of their academic and artistic scholarship in the visual arts, the performing arts, or creative writing.

Each year some 3,000 candidates are identified for the academic component of the program, based on having scored exceptionally well on the College Board SAT or the ACT Assessment. Eligible students are U.S. citizens graduating or receiving a diploma between January and August of the current program year, and students who have taken the SAT or ACT Assessment on or before the preceding September. Students meeting these requirements are automatically considered for participation. Initial inclusion in the pool of eligible candidates is determined by the information (e.g., citizenship or graduation year) provided by the student on his/her SAT or ACT test registration.

Test scores in each of the states/jurisdictions are reviewed, and the total SAT score is compared to the ACT Sum of Scores. Each student's highest test score (in a single test administration) is identified; duplicates and/or lower scores are dropped. In each state, scores are ranked from high to low. Approximately twenty females and twenty males are selected as candidates from each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and from families of U.S. citizens living abroad. Students are considered in their states of legal residence, unless they have lived abroad for two years or more. Candidacy materials are mailed to students for participation in the program. Application is by invitation only; students do not apply individually to the program, nor do their schools nominate them.

For the arts component of the Program, students are initially selected based on their artistic ability. Students must register for and participate in *youngARTS*, a national

program identifying and recognizing young people demonstrating excellence in the arts. Upon completion of the *youngARTS* program, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts nominates approximately 60 students who meet the Presidential Scholars candidacy requirements. Candidacy materials are mailed to those selected students, inviting them to apply to the program. To confirm their interest and assist in the selection process, all academic and arts candidates complete and submit candidacy materials for review, including essays, self-assessments, secondary school reports and transcripts.

A review committee of qualified individuals experienced in secondary and post-secondary education evaluates candidates on their academic achievement, personal characteristics, leadership and service activities, and the quality and content of their essay.

Approximately 500 candidates are named semifinalists, and their names and supporting materials are forwarded to the Commission for further review.

In April, the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars reviews the applications of all semifinalists, applying the same criteria used by the review committee. The Commission selects up to 121 Academic Scholars and up to 20 Arts Scholars. All scholars are honored for their accomplishments during the program's national recognition events, held in June in Washington, D.C.

During this trip, Presidential Scholars are guests of the Commission and enjoy an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to meet with government officials, educators, authors, musicians, scientists and other accomplished people. Scholars have the opportunity to visit museums and monuments, and to attend recitals, receptions and ceremonies. To commemorate their achievement, the Scholars are awarded the Presidential Scholars medallion at a ceremony sponsored by the White House.

Each Presidential Scholar is asked to identify the one teacher who has most influenced him or her, and the selected educators are also invited to attend the recognition events. These distinguished professionals are honored for their efforts at a special reception, and presented with the Teacher Recognition award.

Since 1964, this unique federal program has honored more than 5,000 Presidential Scholars, who have demonstrated leadership, scholarship, artistic ability and contribution to school and community. The work of the Commission on Presidential Scholars reaffirms, on behalf of the President, the Nation's commitment to education.

For general information about the Presidential Scholars Program, please contact 202/401-0961 or <http://www.ed.gov/programs/psp/index.html> (case sensitive). For general information on the Arts component of the program, please contact the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts at 1-800-970-ARTS or <http://www.nfaa.org>. For specific questions regarding the Presidential Scholars Program application, contact 319/341-2PSP (341-2777) or PSP@act.org.